

Brand against tax measure

By Joe Kidd
Emerald Politics Editor

The University next year: Students will have to pay up to \$2,000 a term for tuition, classes will be even more difficult to pack into, and faculty members will be paid at a rate even lower than they now get, which is already well below the national average.

That's how the University's near future looks if the property tax-limiting Ballot Measure 5 passes in the Nov. 6 elections, said University President Myles Brand.

If the measure succeeds next month, the University would likely lose \$30 million or more over the next two years, Brand said.

That size budget slash would set off a rash of drastic "crisis management" measures ranging from double or triple tuition hikes and the freezing of all faculty salaries to entire programs possibly being cut, he said.

"At that point, the object

would be to maintain the core of the University," Brand said.

Measure 5, on the ballot by initiative petition, would limit property taxes next year to \$25 per \$1,000 of assessed value, and would eventually ratchet that ceiling down to \$15 per \$1,000 in 1995.

Because the initiative provides no other source of income, the state would be required to replace the lost revenue from its general fund over the next six years — a total pegged at more than \$4.2 billion, according to the measure's fiscal impact statement.

Oregon's universities and colleges would face a cut of \$120 million during 1991-93 — with the University's share of that loss slated for \$30 million — if the initiative succeeds, according to estimates released two weeks ago by the chancellor's office of the state higher education system.

"We now have difficulties in class sizes and insufficient funds because of a budget cut of \$2 million three years ago,"

Brand said. "I leave it to your imagination to find out what kinds of difficulties we would have on campus if that cut was \$30 million instead of \$2 million."

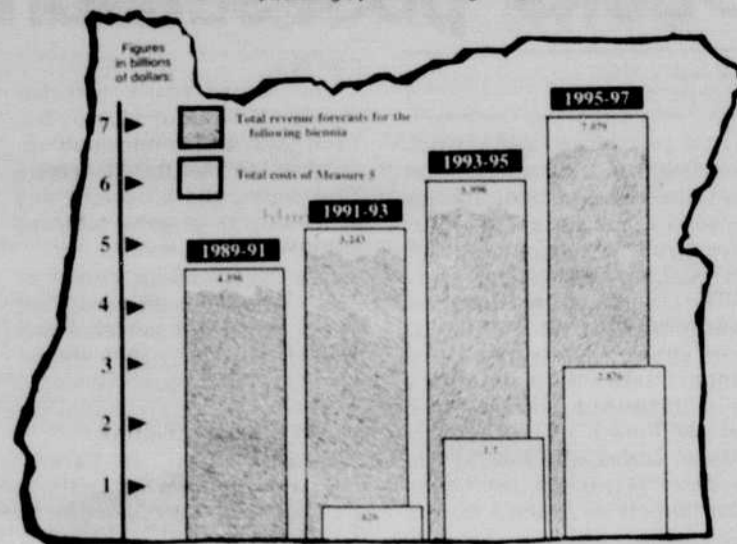
Beyond the next two years, higher education's loss to the measure would rise even further to nearly \$800 million during 1993-97 if no other source of funding for the state is found, the chancellor's office estimated.

"We are talking about an amount equal to the closure of Oregon State University or one of the regional state colleges. That's how much Measure 5 would pull out of the state's (higher education) system," Brand said.

"Those who favor the measure want the user to pay for it all. That would mean students would be paying full-freight," he said.

Carl Hosticka, the state's House majority leader, said he believes a sales tax proposal would be the Legislature's most

Measure 5 Impact on State General Fund
(Assuming 9 percent value growth)



Graphic by Michael Russell

likely reaction if Measure 5 passes.

"The only way to avoid that kind of a (financial) nightmare would be that the Legislature convene a special session sometime between the elections and the end of the year to enact a sales tax," he said.

"But if the atmosphere is such that Measure 5 passes,

that may not be possible," he said. "There may be a lot of people unwilling to do anything in that kind of atmosphere."

If the initiative passes, the state's future budget process "would be a real blood bath, where no one is safe," Hosticka said.

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